tants and their customs than the average Amhara.

Thus, the officials with whom the average Amhara has to deal are the headman (cheqa shum), the district tax-collector, the thiefcatcher-in white, and the judge of the nearest market town; also, the priest and/or new, young teacher of written Amharic and arithmetic for the first and second grade. Very often, the governor, who is usually a former feudal lord himself, may grant the posts of district chief (worada shum) and lieutenant (mislanè) to the lower nobility, or their sons; while they in turn draw on their loyal retainers for the more local jobs of headman and thiefcatcher-in-white. In this manner the former feudal structure of human relationships is retained in the old Amhara provinces, despite the official breakup of the system at the top levels. The former feudal chief may even still be addressed by his old title, which has been officially transformed from a military to a civilian significance, but he is still the "telleq saw" ("great man" and conservative pacesetter.

This pattern of residential kin-hamlets and feudal relationships changes only in the urban centers which grow out of permanent market spots. The market area is usually located on a little hill, called "arada". Soon a church is built there, and a public area below the hill is cleared of bush to serve as a camping place for caravans, and as a race course for the young Amharas' horse games on Christmas, Epiphany and other feast days. On the hill, the district chief or governor builds his "palace", with a large courtyard for his retainers and office-seekers. The local judges gradually graduate from their table-beneath-the-cy-

1: Messing E-5 (1953-1954)1957 MP5 Amhara MP5

443 press to more permanent quarters. Arabs set up more perma-
●369 nent stalls at the market. Girls "between marriages" set up their "hotel services" in makeshift shacks, featuring an imported double bed, and foods like the housewife makes at home, including daily fresh beer. A bizarre variety of trade goods pours in, of foreign or domestic origin. Finally, the government sets up an elementary school-- the most recent development, usually post-1942.

B. Shelter: The Amhara Hut.

342 The Amhara circular hut of wattle and daub, with its overhanging roof to carry off the rains, is called "tuqul" (now more often "sar byet", i.e. thatched house; in some districts, "gojo"). It does not differ basically from the typical habitation of the Cushitic-speaking Galla, of cen-
[84] tral Ethiopia. But further south several distinctly different types are encountered, following ethno-linguistic and tribal lines.

The "tuqul" may contain one room or two, through an interior separation or special elevation. It usually houses both the biological family of procreation and their more important livestock which are brought in at night for fear of hyenas. Tuquls in more elaborate hamlets include special storage tuquls, a kitchen tuqul, and even a guest tuqul which may double as extra storage space for the largest beer jars. During the rainy season, when temperatures, especially at night, drop considerably, the family huddles closely around the central fireplace inside the tuqul, and in that 3-month season the tuqul can be considered overcrow-

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

178 565 661 So long as they remain loyal, the Emperor has tended to let members of the new nobility help themselves to the spoils of office. Some of them retain the view that public office is a private possession, a reward from the emperor rather than an obligation to the nation or people, and that it is, therefore, appropriate to use governmental position primarily to help one's relatives, inflate one's ego, and multiply one's wealth.

178 565 556 [241] [455] For the new nobility, however, wealth is no longer measured primarily in terms of land and cattle, but of money. If they own land, it is of interest chiefly as a source of income, and they tend to prefer using it for cash crops like coffee and *çhat* (a narcotic plant sold in quantities to Arabs) than for the traditional grains and pulse or for experimental crops. They prefer to speculate in real estate rather than to increase the output of their farmlands. Indeed, because of the heightened prestige of money, many officials have been grateful—or would be grateful—for the opportunity to leave government service and become entrepreneurs. They feel very close to that small number of Ethiopians outside the government who have acquired much wealth through commercial enterprise, and who may also be included in the status group of the new nobility.

178 565 556 472 [175] [648] Commercial entrepreneurs came into prominence on the Ethiopian scene in the 1920's, when monopolies in alcohol, matches, salt, and tobacco, as well as trade in coffee and skins, enabled a small number of Ethiopian families, Christian as well as Muslim, to accumulate wealth. Such people became prisoners of their wealth during the occupation, since they felt obliged to collaborate with the Italians in order to protect their privileges. Many more Ethiopians have profited from the modest economic activity in the country since the liberation, although most of Ethiopia's trade remains in the hands of Arabs, Greeks, and Armenians (at least nominally). Their social level approximates that of the higher government officials. They are expected to pay their respects at court along with the *makuännent* and *bäla-seltän*. They [662] are often related to high government officials, and attempt to make use of their relatives in office to help them secure commercial advantages. Above all, they share the same style of life.

178 565 369 177 [556] As an urban group, the new nobility enjoy a style of life notably different from that of their predecessors who lived on mountainous estates and in army tents. Even if assigned to provincial posts, members of the new nobility tend to maintain homes in Addis Ababa. They have been quick to incorporate the more conventional urban Western forms of conspicuous consumption. Automobiles and chauffeurs, expensive European clothes, modern houses, Scotch whiskey, and Western-style banquets and dances have become the common ingredients of their subculture.

178 565 554 At the same time, traditional symbols of prestige are still in evidence. The

12:Young E-4,5 (1966) 1971 MP5 Amhara MP5
Begemder

PREFACE

121 This dissertation describes the medical beliefs and practices of an Amhara population of northwestern Ethio-
114 pia. The field research upon which it is based was con-
131 ducted from January to December, 1966, in the highland area of Begemder province that extends from Gorgora, on the northern shore of Lake Tana, to Debark, overlooking
101 the Takassie valley (see Map 3). This region is occupied
144 by four ethnic groups, the Amhara, Abyssinian Muslims,
197 Falasha (Abyssinian Jews), and Agaw (former pagans). All
131 are racially indistinguishable from one another, and speak a common language, Amharic. North of the Takassie River live the Tigre, a people closely related to the Amhara and, like the latter, Coptic Christians.

101 The Amhara, who are the most numerous of Begemder's peoples, also inhabit much of the highland plateau extending to the south, into Gojam and Shoa provinces, and to
231 the east, into Wollo province. Most Amhara are rural folk
241 who practice a mixed agricultural economy, gorwing grains
621 and pulses; raising sheep, goats, and cattle. The Amhara
632 countryside is divided into parishes. A parish is composed of several hamlets whose residents live on dispersed homesteads, and share important social and econo-
369 mic ties through their parish's church. In addition to these rural folk, Amhara constitute a majority among the townspeople of highland Begemder.

12:Young E-4,5 (1966) 1971 MP5 Amhara MP5
Begemder

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*757 the memelesa counters the effect of the poison, which
628 stands in the place that the primary medicine would in any other internally administered herbalist therapy.

The remaining therapy attracting clients from beyond the hamlet is Nikersa:kitabiy:A:I, and is the hamlet's best example of a therapy of medhaniyt awakiy grade. As an "amulet therapy", it has no memelesa, nor does it allow for a diagnosis to the administration of the therapy. The grading of such therapies is dependent upon criteria of efficacity and professional reputation; this nikersa therapy is regarded as relatively effective and it attracts clients from all Woggera, in spite of the presence of redundant therapies within this area.

THE DISTRIBUTION OF SECULAR HEALERS IN URBAN BEGEMDER

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632 Less than 5% of the province's people are classified
• [369] "urban" by Government census.[16] Half of these townfolk live in Gondar, the provincial capital. Although Gondar is the administrative, ecclesiastical, and commercial center of Begemder, its demographic and social character-

[16] 56,000 out of a total of 1.24 million (EAS1965: 23-24).

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two as talla sellers, and one each as mat seller, carpenter, day laborer, and pensioner.

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The practice of herbalist therapies in ward and town contrasts significantly with the situation in rural hamlet and parish. The relatively dense population of the town has important consequences. In the countryside, the closest herbalist needed for a specific episode may be a day's walk from the client's home; in the town several may be found within an hour's walk. The increase in herbalist therapies is not directly proportional to the increased population of town over countryside, however.

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In Gabrael sebeka, for example, only eighteen households (41% of the total) contain one or more herbalists. Many townfolk are forced to abstain from practicing herbalist therapies, because, as out-landers, they are unable or disinclined to locate needed botanicals. Also, significant numbers of townsfolk practice non-secular therapies, particularly as balazars.

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Further, although there are more redundant herbalist therapies potentially available to the townsman, he remains ignorant of many of them. The peasant locates himself within a network of several core kinsmen and neighbors upon whom he depends for information regarding herbalist chains. The townsman finds his place in a social matrix in which kinship ties are greatly diluted by distance. In Gabrael sebeka, for example, thirty-two house-

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holds (73% of the total) are without kinship ties to any other of the ward's households. Although many of these residents have kinsmen in other parts of Gondar, few have more than one or two relatives in the town. In addition, because most townfolk rely upon non-agricultural employment for their subsistence needs, there is a concomitant disinterest in ambilineage fields. A consequence is a weakening of the important economic bonds which otherwise link kinsmen to one another.

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Kinship ties are an important means by which the peasant acquires and communicates information necessary for constructing herbalist chains. Since almost every herbalist therapy of the rural parish enjoys its own "pedigree", or trans-generational reputation, the peasant herbalist is provided with means for 1) publicly validating his therapeutic claims, and 2) communicating the existence of the therapy to his potential clients. Potential clients frequently associate the ownership of a famous herbalist therapy with the members of a specific ambilineage, often identifiable by name. Both the ambilineage (whose identity is linked to its fields) and its medical reputation (which is tied to the ambilineage) are attached to a particular location. Since residence is most often viripatrilocal, the transmission of such therapeutic reputations is characterized by an agnatic bias. The male therapist moving to town, like

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12:Young E-4,5 (1966) 1971 MP5 Amhara MP5
Begemder

the female moving away to her husband's parish, is generally cut off from this reputation. Thus, the herbalist in the town must most often establish this professional existence and reputation de novo. There is no way in which he can stimulate clients to come his way other than by empirical proofs. If his therapy is directed against an ailment for which even expert herbalist therapy promises success in only a fraction of cases, or an ailment which is epidemiologically infrequent, his difficulties are so much the greater. Thus, in spite of Gondar's relatively great population, the town contains only a handful of herbalists of provincial-wide fame. These same considerations dampen the herbalist's readiness to acquire new disease-name specialties. In addition to the difficulties already noted in Chapter 2, such a therapist would likewise be forced to establish his new professional presence de novo, even though he enjoyed an already established reputation against another ailment.

The contrast between the place of herbalist therapies in town and country has been most notably effected by the relative accessibility of non-herbalist therapies in the town. This is a result of the concentration of non-herbalist practitioners in towns, and of the relative affluence enabling townsmen to purchase more expensive therapies.

12:Young E-4,5 (1966) 1971 MP5 Amhara MP5
Begemder

*278 *759 632 are no debtera therapists, and, although there are several women who are members of zar coteries (and are, thus, balazar) none publicly practiced therapies which might have been obtained from zars or fellow balazars. In contrast, the following non-secular therapies are practiced in Gabrael sebeka:

	Non-secular therapies	Herbalist therapies
Balazar 1	7	
Balazar 2	7	
Balazar 3	8	
Debtera 1	6	
Debtera 2[20]	10	
Total	40	31
% of all therapies of Gabrael sebeka	56%	44%

*278 *759 369 In summary, then, herbalists figure less prominantly in the town than in the countryside. The townsman more frequently omits them from relevant practitioner chains, or limits them to the initial consultation in such chains. 369 95 However, from the perspective of the system of Amhara medical beliefs, this contrast between town and country

[20] In ecclesiastical terms, this man is not entitled to the title of "debtera".

12:Young E-4,5 (1966) 1971 MP5 Amhara MP5
Begemder

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76 has no important consequences, and, in terms of Amhara medical practices, the contrast is statistical rather than substantive.

sident student by familiarizing him with the network of churches, monasteries, and academies which constitute the stations along which the student will progress once he leaves his natal parish.

[192] The completion of psalter (dawiyd) is frequently considered a sign of the student's readiness to be tested by the local bishop (abuna) for certification as a deacon. The boy is fifteen or sixteen by this time, and the recipient of church fields in return for his performance in the Mass; with his marriage a few years later, he becomes a priest. The boy bent on a debtera career generally waits until he has been certified a deacon, since this is considered a prerequisite for enrollment in his first debtera school.

With the exceptions already cited, a man is certain to oppose his son's departure, since, sentiment aside, the boy's move usually represents a significant economic loss. When he leaves his natal parish, he does so secretly, journeying to a distant debtera, in order to conceal his new residence from his father. Thus, he begins his debtera career without kinfolk or friends to protect him, without resources to meet his subsistence needs.[23]

[23] Since liberation, government (secular) schools have offered an alternative to an ecclesiastical education pursuant to government employment. The effects of this have been limited, however, since only an estimated 3% pass beyond the eighth grade (ESA 1965:198). In addition children of townsmen and non-Amhara are disproportionately represented in these classes.